

UNIT 3 HANDOUT

STAY OR GO HOME?

Excerpt from *A Hessian Diary of the American Revolution* by Johann Conrad Döhla.

"As America has only been so recently discovered and settled by the Europeans, it is difficult to believe that this land is already so developed. It is nearly on a par with Europe. The most beautiful cities are to be found everywhere, and these are well laid out, mostly large, and with good public buildings; well provided with police supervision and security, and comfort.

Trade, especially from Philadelphia, is with the East and West Indies and with all the world. Everyone has a trade and can pursue it unhindered and earn a living without first belonging to a trade guild as we require. This is a great advantage and draws many thousands of people from other parts of the world.

The farmers live better in America than our cavaliers and nobility. Their homes are exceptionally charming and for the most part are [set] among many varieties of the best fruit trees. The rooms are nicely furnished also, with wallpaper or tapestries and furniture of which the most distinguished cavalier would not be ashamed. In peacetime the citizens in the cities as well as those on the land, have a silver service, which, however, during the present war mostly has been hidden and buried. No shortage of splendid carriages is to be noted in the city nor in the country, because the simplest craftsmen drive a chaise, finely lacquered and bearing their crest. Their daughters, whose hair is curled twice as high as that of the ladies at home, drive about for pleasure because it is acknowledged that fashion here is the one thing that the women follow without thought of position or wealth. Only the Quakers, already mentioned, are an exception to this. Although they are among the richest people, their daughters dress very plainly. They have a cap or a round silver hat, and never adorn themselves with bright ribbons or ornaments of gold and silver."